



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jefferson National
Expansion Memorial

11 North 4th Street
St. Louis MO 63102
www.nps.gov/jeff

314-655-1600 phone
314-655-1641 fax

Press Release

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Contact(s): Caitlin McQuade (314) 655.1720

Bob Moore (314) 655.1629

The National Park Service Spotlights Local Artist's Historic Paintings Feb. 14 through Aug. 22

Special Exhibit Illustrates How the Riverfront Landscape Changed Over Time

(St. Louis, Mo.) – Jefferson National Expansion Memorial will host a special exhibit from St. Louis artist Sheila Harris at the Old Courthouse from Feb. 14 through Aug. 22, 2010. Created especially for the memorial, the exhibit consists of nearly 40 watercolor paintings of buildings that once stood on the Arch grounds. The exhibit will launch with an artist's reception on Sunday, Feb. 14, at 2 p.m.

Harris' "portraits" of buildings depict structures from several generations of the city's architectural history illustrating how the landscape on the riverfront evolved over time. The paintings are grouped based on four historic and stylistic eras on the riverfront. In addition, each portrait will include maps showing the buildings' original locations, architectural fragments from the buildings, interpretive text and an artist's statement.

Harris, a St. Louis native, taught art at Rosary High School for 36 years. The exhibit is curated by her sister, NiNi Harris, a local historian and the author of nine books on St. Louis history, architecture, city neighborhoods and the Gateway Arch.

While the exhibit is on display at the Courthouse, Harris will discuss and demonstrate her technique during several scheduled appearances. A schedule of the appearances can be found online at www.nps.gov/jeff.

NiNi Harris will also present a historical play based on the exhibit during its run. NiNi offers that the exhibit will "expand in a different media the riverfront story and bring to life the fact that there was once a wonderful collection of buildings there ranging from simple to ornate and from modest to grandiose. We have been so very fortunate in St. Louis, for we tore down a great collection of buildings, but got a great sculpture (the Gateway Arch) and landscape in their place. This is very rare in history and is one of the points I hope the exhibit will demonstrate."

This exhibit is possible due to the generous support from Jefferson National Parks Association.

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